

Starport Kickball Rules 2012

Field of Play & Game Equipment

- Starport Kickball games will be played on a full kickball/softball diamond (or an area of equal size).
- Equipment will be provided by Starport, and will consist of kickball bases, a standard 8.5 inch kickball, and a "safety base" at first base, which is to be used by the runners when advancing to first base.

Officials

- **Each team is required to provide volunteers from their team to umpire other games within their division during the season, according to a set schedule.** Please see your divisional schedule for specific details about your umpiring schedule. We expect all teams to take this responsibility seriously. Peer umpiring allows us to keep league costs down, while preserving a more laid back and social atmosphere during your games than if "official" umpires were used.
- **Umpires MUST be sober, relatively competent on the game rules, and must actively engage in controlling the game.** If poor or disruptive umpires are reported to the Sports and Recreation Director, their team will be penalized a loss of the first at bat in their next game. It is suggested that each captain designate specific and consistent team-mates to act as umpires during the season for required games to ensure a firm grasp of the game rules and procedures.
- **The games shall be officiated by a minimum of (2) two umpires:** (1) one home plate umpire and (1) one infield umpire. The home plate umpire issues all final rulings.
- ***Failure to provide umpires for assigned games will result in the loss of that team's first turn at bat in their next game.***
- The umpire's call is final and not to be disputed. **A team may invoke (1) one "challenge" to an umpire's call per game if the call involves a tag out or force out play only.** Plays at home plate are NOT challengeable. The challenge must be granted by the home plate umpire. Plays that are not close in the opinion of the home plate umpire are NOT challengeable.
- A challenge will be decided by a game of "rock, paper, scissors" between team captains. The winner of the challenge will receive the benefit of the acceptance or reversal of the umpire's call on the field.
- The only players who may request a challenge are the team's designated Captain and Co-Captain.
- Participants who verbally and/or physically threaten another team member or Starport organizer/representative during a Starport sanctioned event will be immediately removed from the game/league with no refund.

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Sportsmanship

- It is each team's and each player's responsibility to ensure a fun, enjoyable atmosphere during each kickball game played. Unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated, and will result in ejection from the game if the behavior does not improve. Starport employees will be given the authority to remove unruly players. Any serious offense has the potential to result in permanent expulsion from all Starport leagues and events.
- **Team Sportsmanship Points** - In an effort to place greater emphasis on maintaining a positive kickball atmosphere, all teams will start the season with 3 "Sportsmanship Points". Any complaint received about your team's behavior or attitude that can be verified and supported by a Starport employee will result in the loss of at least 1 sportsmanship point. ***Teams who have 2 or more points deducted during the course of the season will NOT be allowed to participate in the post season tournament. Teams who lose all 3 points during the course of the season may lose the privilege of participating in future Starport seasons.*** In other words, it is in your best interest as a team to make sure the other team has a great time! "Complaints" may be made by team captains ONLY, and captains must make the Sports and Recreation Director aware of the situation within 24 hours of the game itself. Major incidents (fights, intentional injuries, etc) will be subject to multiple points being deducted at the field monitor and commissioner's discretion, potentially resulting in immediate removal of a team from the league.

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Game Participants

- All participants must be (16) sixteen years of age or older.
- Although this is a recreational league, players are strongly advised to have personal health insurance for protection against any injury that may occur during kickball play. By registering for and participating in this league, players are inherently agreeing to a waiver or liability, acknowledging that STARPORT is not responsible for any injuries related to game participation. Participants who play without health insurance play at their own risk.
- Team rosters may hold a maximum of 18 players.
- **Each team is allowed to field up to (11) eleven players on the field for defense**, and must have a minimum of (8) players on defense. If a team fields (9) nine or more players, (1) one player must play the catcher position. **Teams may play a maximum of 6 men on the field for defense.*** There is no limit to the number of women who may be on the field, as long as the total number of defenders is 11 or less. *If a team only has 8 players, only 4 men can be on the field. For 9 and 10 player teams, only 5 men can be on the field.
- **All players present MUST kick, and the kicking order must remain consistent throughout the course of the game.** It is not necessary to use guy / girl order, but all players must kick each time through the lineup. **Teams suspected of kicking out of turn in order to gain an advantage will be required to line up single-file for the remainder of the game to maintain the proper order.**
- Teams who are short on players at the start of a game will be allowed a 5 minute grace period for stragglers to arrive. Substitute players may be used at any time to accumulate the necessary number of players, as long as those substitute players are not currently on another team in the division. Teams wishing to use other divisional players to complete their roster for the evening will be allowed to do so, but must concede 1 penalty run to the opposing team for each of the divisional players used, unless "pardoned" by their opponent.

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Regulation Games

- A regulation game shall consist of (7) innings or a time limit of (50) fifty minutes. If a game starts late, it shall be played until (5) five minutes before the next game's starting time.
- The away team shall bat first. The home team gets last at bat if the time limit is near.
- The head umpire may call a game if an inning may not reasonably be completed before the (50) fifty minute time limit. Therefore, an inning cannot begin (50) fifty minutes after the hour unless it is the last scheduled game.
- A game is considered official when (4) four full innings have been played.
- Tie games may continue into extra innings only if there is time remaining from the (50) fifty minute limit, with a recheck of the clock after each full extra inning. Both regular season and tournament games may end in ties. Ties in tourney standings will be broken with a 1 inning playoff.
- Postponed games may be played at a future date, if it can be coordinated with the Gilruth Center. Any games not replayed shall be counted as a tie in the standings.
- Each team is allowed (2) two base coaches, (1) one at first base and (1) one at third base. All other offensive players must remain in the dugout area at all times. You will receive (1) one warning for your first violation each violation after will result in an out.
- **MERCY RULE** - Any time a team is trailing by 10 or more runs, they will be allowed to start the next, and each following inning with runners at second and third base (to remove the force out) as long as the opposing team's lead continues to be 10 or more runs. The runners assigned to the bases shall one guy and one girl who kicked in the previous inning. If at any point the lead drops below 10 runs, then the trailing team will go back to starting the next inning with the bases clear.

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Pitching & Kicking

- A legal pitch must roll along the ground with minimal bounce as it makes its way to home plate. So keep the pitch flat at all times! Pitches must be thrown at slow speeds at all times. "Fireballing" is not allowed. Additionally, pitches may not have intentional spin or any type of curve placed on them by the pitcher.
- **No Called Balls or Strikes** - There are no called balls or strikes, meaning that there are no walks, or called strike outs. When you see a pitch you like... kick it! If you don't like it, don't kick it.
- **"We Want a Pitcher.... Not a Belly Itcher!"** – Once per game, the kicking team may request that an opposing player be removed from the pitching position. The kicking team may only invoke this rule if they feel that pitches have been unsatisfactory, with home plate umpire approval. If you don't like the pitches, then this is your remedy. DO NOT complain about the pitching to the umpire! Use the rule... that's why it's there.
- **Two foul balls during a single at bat will be considered a "strike out".** *If a ball is on the ground, fair or foul is determined by its position as it passes third or first base. The path the ball took to get to that point is irrelevant. A ball that is kicked in the air down either foul line will be determined fair or foul by the position of the BALL when it lands or is touched, and is NOT determined by the position of the fielder when touched. Additionally, the trajectory of the ball does not determine whether it is fair or foul.*
- The ball must be kicked at or behind home plate. If the ball is kicked in front of home plate and the kicker makes it on base safely, the kicker will receive a called foul ball. If it's a second foul, the kicker is out. If a kick in front of home plate results in the defensive team recording an out, then the defensive team may choose either the result of the play, or may have the kicker re-kick if they prefer (in the case of a run scoring on a tag up, force out, etc)
- **Teams may not bunt, unless they are trailing by 10 or more runs.** Teams that are trailing by 10 or more runs will have this restriction lifted until the lead is narrowed to 9 or less. Although legal once down by 10, ridicule is encouraged for manbunters!
- **A "Bunt" will be considered to be any ground ball that does not reach the infield base line (line running from first to second, and from second to third).** Full swing "mis-kicks" will be considered bunts if they do not reach the infield base line. Bunting while leading, or while trailing by less than 10 will be ruled a foul ball. If it is the second foul ball for the kicker, it will be an out. If the defender believes that a kick is in fact a bunt, they must allow the ball to stop rolling. ***If the defender chooses to charge the ball and make a play on it, then the kick cannot be ruled a bunt.***
- Double Kicks (foot then shin, knee then foot, etc) will be immediately ruled a foul ball.

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Fielding

- Infield players may not cross ahead of the base lines until the ball is kicked.
- Since there is no bunting allowed, pitchers are not allowed to advance towards the plate until AFTER the ball is kicked. The kicker will be allowed to re-kick if a pitcher advances towards the plate intentionally after a pitch, before the ball is kicked.
- The catcher must be located BEHIND the kicker at all times during the kick. In other words the pitcher – kicker – catcher shall form a straight line. The catcher may not interfere with the kicker. Catcher interference will result in a re-kick. For kickers that have a distant starting point from home plate, the catcher may stand in front and to the side of the kicker, but must move behind the kicker at the moment he/she is kicking. Catchers cannot play "up the line" to defend against bunting.
- The batting team has three outs per inning. ***An out occurs due to the following:***
 - i. Two strikes
 - ii. A ball caught on the fly.
 - iii. A base runner is forced out. (A "force" can either be a throw to the lead base, or a tag of a runner who must advance. Choosing to tag the runner does not change the fact that it is a force play, thus any runs that cross home plate during this type of play on a third out would not count.)
 - iv. A base runner is hit with the ball. (if a non-forced runner is hit with the ball before another runner crosses home plate in third out situations, the run does not score.)
- **Infield Flies** - While there will be no automatic outs called on infield flies, if a fielder purposely attempts to drop an infield popup in the hope of turning a double play the runner already on base will be allowed to return to their base without being forced out and the kicker will be called out.
- The play ends when the pitcher has the ball in control and is near the mound or a runner intentionally tries to touch or stop the ball. ***Don't be "that guy" who keeps running when everyone knows the play is over.***

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Running

- Runners must stay within the base line. Runners who are obstructed by passive fielders (fielders not making a play on the ball) within the base line shall be awarded the base.
- **Stealing or leading off base is prohibited.** A runner will be given 1 warning, and will be called out thereafter, if caught being off base when the ball is kicked.
- **Foul balls are considered dead balls.** Runners may not tag up after a foul ball is caught.
- **SLIDING** - As a general rule, sliding is not allowed in Starport kickball games, except for head first "divebacks" to a base that has been over-run. Players who slide into a base will be called out by the field umpire. **EXCEPTION:** Opposing captains may agree to allow sliding during their game, and must inform their umpire / monitor of that decision. If captains do not agree, then the general rule applies... no sliding. If captains agree to allow sliding, the sliding players must use caution at all times to protect the safety of the defensive player. Slides deemed to be reckless or with intent to injure will result in the immediate removal of the sliding player from the game.
- Runners may advance (at their own risk) one additional base on an overthrow that goes out of the field of play, into the non-fenced side of the field. The defending team is allowed to attempt to make a play on a runner who is advancing, so the additional base is not guaranteed. An overthrow to the fenced side of the field is still considered a live ball, unless it enters into the area being occupied by the kicking team, in which case it will become a dead ball, and runners must stop advancing.
- After a ball is caught, runners must tag their originating base before running to the next base. Failure to do so results in an out if the runner is tagged by the ball or the ball is thrown to a fielder touching the previous base.
- Hitting the runner with the ball above the shoulders is prohibited. ***Any runner hit above the shoulders with a ball shall be awarded the base, regardless of the action of the runner (ducking, dodging, etc). It is the fielder's responsibility to use caution with their throws.***
- If a kicked ball is in fair territory and hits a runner or the kicker himself, the player is out, except in the scenario of a double kick (see Pitching & Kicking).

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Designated runner/player positions

- If a kicking / running player is injured, a time-out may be called for a player substitution of the same sex who made the last out. The team inserting the substitute runner must inform the opposing team of their actions.
- An injured player may kick, while a substitute player runs for them, as long as the sub is of the same sex and the opposing team is made aware of the situation.
- The pitcher may only be replaced on the mound once per inning

Score Submission

- All scores will be submitted online using the Starport website score submission forms:
 - <http://starport.jsc.nasa.gov/Fitness/Sports/Kickball/Schedules/index.cfm>
- The team captain (or his/her designee) of the home team is responsible for submitting the score of the game within 48 hours of the end of the game.
 - It is the home team's responsibility to submit this score. If the home team does not submit the score within the allotted amount of time, the home team will receive a warning and reminder. If the home team does not submit the score within the 48 hours again, the home team will receive a loss for that game.
- In the event of an ACCIDENTAL incorrectly stated score, both teams will be contacted to ensure proper scores have been reported.
- If one team is found to INTENTIONALLY submit incorrect scores, that team will be awarded a loss for the game in question AND a forfeit for their next scheduled game. The team will also be referred to as "NOT NICE".

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Miscellaneous

- NO SMOKING IN OR WITHIN 10 FEET OF THE DUGOUTS
- NO PETS ALLOWED ON GILRUTH FACILITY
- NO CHILDREN UNDER AGE OF 16 IN DUGOUT